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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/656,312	09/05/2003	Sylvia H. Pas	TI-22398.1	8214

23494 7590 04/28/2004

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS INCORPORATED
P O BOX 655474, M/S 3999
DALLAS, TX 75265

EXAMINER

AHMED, SHAMIM

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1765

DATE MAILED: 04/28/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/656,312	PAS, SYLVIA H.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Shamim Ahmed	1765	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 September 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 15 is objected to because of the following informalities: in claim 15, line 3, the use of "a" is unnecessary between the phrase "the " and "transfer chamber".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 14-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

4. Claim 14 recites the limitation "the oxide *layer*" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

5. Regarding claim 17, the phrase "solution comprises .049% to 49% HF" renders the claim(s) indefinite because it is unclear whether the percent (%) HF solution is by weight or by volume.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 14-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kikuchi (5,620,559).

Kikuchi discloses a process of removing oxide layer by exposing a semiconductor wafer comprises silicon substrate (104) in a HF processing chamber (105), wherein the HF is 10 % by volume (col.9, lines 32-62, figure 10).

Kikuchi also discloses that the silicon wafer is then align or line up for automatically transferring to a process module such as a deposition chamber (140) (col.11, lines 28-42 and figures 10 and 11).

8. Claims 14-16,18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hawthorne et al (5,770,263).

Hawthorne et al disclose a process of removing oxide film from a silicon wafer surface including the process steps of exposing a silicon wafer to a vaporous solution of hydrofluoric acid (HF) for removing the oxide film, wherein the process is performed in a cluster tool is generally defined as a transfer module which transfer the wafer into a first chamber such as HF vapor clean and then the wafer is transfer to a second chamber such as a deposition chamber, in which at least one metallic film is intentionally deposited (col.4, lines 12-30).

As to claim 20, Hawthorne et al teach that the deposited film comprises polysilicon and tungsten (col.4, lines 12-13).

9. Claims 14-16,18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Huang et al (5,670,431).

Huanga et al disclose a process of deposition of a thin layer of silicon nitride on a semiconductor wafer substrate, wherein the substrate is subjected to a HF vapor cleaning process prior to the deposition process (col.5, lines 38-45).

Huanga et al also disclose that a wafer transfer system (52) transfer a single wafer from wafer loading station (58) to the HF cleaning system (56) and than to the film forming chamber (54) (col.6, line 65-col.7, line 15 and Figure 6).

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Saga et al (5,679,171) disclose a cleaning process for oxide film using HF vapor.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shamim Ahmed whose telephone number is (571) 272-1457. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thu (7:00-5:30) Every Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nadine G Norton can be reached on (571) 272-1465. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 1765

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Shamim Ahmed
Examiner
Art Unit 1765

SA
April 22, 2004